THE LABOR PARTY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR A SOCIALIST CANADA

Part 1 of a series of 4 talks by Ross Dowson (1972)

"The struggle to build a party of the class"

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(Kim Boyd introduction) Tonight Ross Dowson, Executive Secretary of the League for Socialist Action, will be dealing in the first class (*on*) the first struggle for a labor party in this country.

(Ross Dowson:)(Applause) Well, comrades, you don't have to worry about a lot of tomes and books to read from - someone was asking me what literature there is on the topic, and really there is no literature on the topic - it's graspable, the material has never been pulled together in a serious way.

When I started to work over the topic, *(I found)* the topic even more interesting than it appears on the brochure, and certainly more important than I first thought when I first projected this forum. Really, what I'm dealing with is the inter-relationship between **the** labor party, or **a** labor party, whatever that means - and I will define that shortly - and the struggle for a socialist Canada. It's not easy to translate the term "labor party." As a matter of fact, in a discussion that Comrade Trotsky had with some of his American co-thinkers, he gets in a little hassle about the use of the word which he employed, "rabotchaya partiya" - I don't know if my Russian is very good - at any rate, he was talking here about a couple of things. When we talk about a labor party, the usual thing that comes into a person's mind is a party similar to the British Labour Party - that is, a reformist party. There is no question that the BLP is a reformist party, not a revolutionary party, but a party which encompasses the class, and quite accurately - but by no means precisely - reflects the level of the consciousness and combativity of the class as a whole, if one can define a thing like that. One can, one can freeze the picture and say - well, one can say that, in general, the Labour Party in general reflects the level of consciousness and combativity of the British working people.

So, I want to talk about the struggle to build **a party of the class** - that encompasses the class. No *(labor-ed.)* party has ever encompassed fully the revolutionary aspirations and embodied the aspirations of the class. In part, of course, some persons would see the question as dealing with the relationship of the trade union movement to political action, another aspect of the question. Because usually when we use the word labor, it's traditionally used to mean the trade union movement, and part of it is based on the union movement. By that criteria, the CCF already qualified by 1948 as a

labor party in our opinion. And the New Democratic Party, by that criteria, qualified for that at its foundation, and qualified on a bigger scale to something more significant in our opinion when the labor party was formed. We thought, at that time, that that party reflected the revolutionary dynamic of the class, and was more significant than a labor party in the classical meaning of the word.

I don't know whether those comments serve as an introduction or not, but any rate, as the class unfolds, you'll find out what I mean. Well first, a few days ago, there was an item in the paper. Mr. Dennison, the Mayor of Toronto, was interviewed by the press. I don't have the interview at hand, but I don't think anybody will challenge what I remember he said. You know, Mr. Dennison is one of the pioneer CCFers, a long-time CCFer to way back into the 30s. He's also a person who can show many persons who talk about community organization lots of tricks. He's probably the most effective and most dynamic community organizer the City of Toronto ever saw. He is now Mayor of Toronto. Most people are aware that Mr. Dennison isn't what he used to be. Or *(what)* they think he used to be. Well, he said a few words a while ago about his aims and aspirations and the meaning of his life. At any rate, this is what he said, "I've achieved all the things that I set out to do - those things have been achieved." I think there's an essential truth to that - what Mr. Dennison sought to achieve, has been generally achieved.

You know, revolutionaries would make a big error if they looked upon the picture today in Canada and thought that the workers are suffering utter degradation, you know, and impoverishment on a mass scale. That's not to say there are not thousands of people, tens and maybe even now hundreds of thousands with developing unemployment, on the verge of the poverty level, as you can say. But the people of this country are generally, for a very extensive length of reasons - none of them can be attributed to the graces of capitalism - for various reasons, they live in a country where they have established a considerable number of reforms - quite extensive. For instance I find that I have hospital care of a fairly extensive character, which was a dream of socialists for many years, you know. Most persons live a tolerable life; they eat regularly, they have acquired a great many things like color TVs even today; so life is not so bad if you talk about establishing a tolerable society. Some call it the "welfare state." Well, that's in essence what we have established in this country - what you might call the welfare state.

And that's what Mr. Dennison was always about, and he can say with considerable truth that he's achieved the aims of his life, because that's all he was ever about. He talked occasionally about socialism, but it wasn't anything with any meaning or any significance, because it was something projected a way, way, far away. I guess he would be quite sure it wouldn't be his generation now, but it is doubtful he **ever** visualized it would be in his generation or his children's children's time, but some ultimate objective much to be desired - but very, very distant.

Well of course, for us - (…) if not for Mr. Dennison, pioneer CCFer who has achieved his aims - for us, we haven't achieved **any** of our aims. What have we achieved? I'll venture to say a few words about what we have achieved - we as socialists. We're out for a fundamental change in social relations. We're against the total system, and we are for the establishment of a totally new and different system - what we call a socialist society. We want to nationalize the basic means of production - the "commanding heights of the economy, as they say. We want them to be owned, operated and controlled by those who now work at them. We want production for use, not profit. I think you can say that today, from a material point of view, that we're no closer than we were, in 1848, when Marx first issued the clarion call, in the Communist Manifesto, for the world socialist revolution. We're no closer in a material way - to socialism. We're closer in one way - as Marx enunciated himself in the Communist Manifesto - a very important way. Marx was talking in this section of the Manifesto about the working class, to whom he attributed a unique role as the revolutionary role in society. Marx didn't mean just the industrial proletariat - as some people have bowdlerized that - but he talked about those who worked for their labor.

And of course, those in heavy industry are more strategically placed, but now with the development of what you might call a broader working class under capitalism, there are wider layers of the new

working class who are also in an extremely key and strategic place, and capitalism as a whole is a system more vulnerable to wider sections of the class than it ever has been in its history.

Marx on the class consciousness of the proletariat

At any rate, Marx was talking about this working class, and he was talking about the struggles of the working class - how they are forced to unite, how they're forced to, by society, by *(their)* relationship to the means of production, to radicalize. He didn't give them any moral superiority; he talked about their relationship to the means of production. He didn't idealize them. Then, he said: what is the important thing? He said, now and then, the workers are victorious, in whatever they were struggling for - higher wages, lower hours, better living conditions - but he said, only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies not in the immediate result of their struggles but in the ever-expanding union of themselves as a class - the ever-expanding union of the workers. He talked about how the important thing in the struggles, the struggles we have now been involved in for some period, is that they organize the proletariat **as a class** - and we can say big strides have been made in that direction - in Canada, and across the world.

And consequently, as a political party. He talks about how the workers have been thrust into the political arena. But we need to make a socialist revolution, and so I will just say a few words about what kind of instrument we need to make a revolution in this country. That's in a sense what the title of the class is - the labor party and the struggle for a socialist Canada. Now you'll note from glancing at the schedule that this class starts, however, with formation of the Communist Party in 1921 - not from the labor party formations in Canada, but from the Communist Party in 1921. We decided to start off there because this was the first successful attempt to form a type of party needed to make a revolution in an advanced capitalist country such as Canada. Fifty-one years ago, there was a gathering of activists - leading activists - from various political formations that had come up in the process of struggle in Canada - it was in Guelph - to organize this Party. They had as yet relatively limited influence in the labor movement, in the trade union movement. Some of them were prominent in the union movement like Jack Macdonald, Tim Buck and others, but they were not a group of great influence and leverage in the labor movement. They had become prominent in the Socialist Labour Party, in the Socialist Party of Canada, the Social-Democratic Party of Canada, the I.W.W. (*International Workers of the World, the "Wobblies," -ed.)* , the O.B.U. *(the One Big Union-ed.)* - they'd gone through all the struggles of their period.

But the main source of their inspiration was outside of Canada, outside of their immediate experience. Their immediate experience allowed them to relate to a much more significant experience. The main source of their inspiration was Russia, from the experience gained from the first successful socialist revolution - the experience of the Russian Social-Democratic labor party, the Bolshevik sector of this party. That's what was their inspiration - because of course it was quite understandable, after all they were for socialism, and they had been fighting for socialism in various ways in their own country, in Canada, and someone had made it - in Russia! The first time in the history of the world that the working class even took power, and that (fact) couldn't help but be fraught with tremendous lessons - how was it made, an important question - any serious person would want to learn. How was it made? Well, they learned from Lenin how it was made, from Trotsky, from the Bolsheviks, from the Communist International, in its early days. They told people "how we made the Revolution" and they also tried to draw generalities, for other people who wanted to make the revolution - because they were internationalists - and they not only wanted other people to succeed in the common struggle, but they knew that their Revolution could not go forward unless the Revolution expanded its frontiers.

It was the beginning of a world revolution, in Lenin's and Trotsky's view, and in the views of the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International. And they said, our Party, in general, the party such as we have built, the so-called "Bolshevik party"- the majority wing of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party - that party is the type of party which is required in general to make a revolution in any advanced capitalist country - they didn't talk about the colonial countries, that was

a whole new experience that came from a new period. But they talked about countries more or less like their own, and those countries where there were important socialist forces. They said, you have to build a vanguard-type of party - no other party can make this revolution. A party that seeks to root itself in the masses of the working class, that's capable of intervening in the varied struggles of the class, in women's liberation, in the antiwar struggle, in all these areas, a party that knows how to move into these *(areas)* - a party that knows how to take these struggles forward, to synchronize and organize and coordinate them. A party of workers who can, and who aspire to be leaders in their own right through the disciplined, centralized and coordinated action of their party, *(who)* will be leaders of the class.

The party has to have a program - that's the first requisite. It has to have a program - the program of socialist revolution; it has to have a common strategy. The Party has to be democratic, so it can utilize the collective knowledge of its members, through discussions and through experience. *(It)* has to test its ideas in real life, but it also has to be disciplined, with a strong leadership and a centralized direction. Otherwise, you can't grapple with the bourgeoisie, you can't come to grips with them because they're organized, and they're disciplined and they're coordinated, and they have power - tremendous power. You have to have a party that can meet that power.

A vanguard party gets underway in Canada

That party got underway in Canada in 1921 - in the years around that time, formally organized in 1921. *(It was)* the first version, the Canadian version, of the type of party that the most far-seeing revolutionaries of that generation were able to organize. We've talked about this in other articles that we've written, some articles that appeared in *Labor Challenge*. We've related the promising start when and how this movement got under way, under the leadership of Jack Macdonald and Maurice Spector - and how it was ruptured. This promising start was ruptured by their expulsion in 1929.

It was of course not a personal conflict between Macdonald and Spector and the other persons in the party, namely Tim Buck. It was around political ideas - it was the famous Trotsky-Stalin feud, that's *(how)* it was talked about, how it was characterized. This party, when it expelled Macdonald and Spector, knocked itself off the track of the Canadian socialist revolution. It became Stalinized - it fell under the sway of a bureaucracy that rose in the Soviet Union that was out to defend its own privileged position, to preserve its own interests on top of the newly born workers state, and it developed a theory which it foisted on the Communist Parties of the world through the Communist International. That theory is called the "Theory of Socialism in One Country," or sometimes called today, in political life, the "Theory of Peaceful Co-existence" - just another form of it.

In that short period, from 1921 to about 1929, that party was transformed from an instrument of socialist revolution in Canada, in this country, into a border-guard of the USSR, of the Soviet bureaucracy, and *(into)* a pawn in the diplomatic maneuvers of the Stalin regime and subsequent regimes that had fallen heir to Stalin, in their diplomatic maneuvers with world capitalism. It ceased to be a party of socialist revolution in its own country.

At that very same period, there also arose a labor party formation. And it's worth relating the experience of the revolutionaries with that labor party formation and I think it will give us some insight into the problems of a labor party, and what it poses for persons who understand *(that)* there needs to be a revolutionary party. There were two experiences as a matter of fact with the labor party, and that is in a sense why we're starting with the Communist Party experience - it was some while back, but there were two experiences with the labor party.

Now of course it wasn't long, as Marx has explained in the Communist Manifesto before workers when they launched themselves in the battle for better wages and hours and working conditions, before they came up against the state. It wasn't long before they came up against *(this obstacle.)* And they recognized that political parties that *(occupied)* some sectors of the state, particularly parliament, which passed laws which were subsequently enforced by other sectors of the state - they soon learned that this apparatus was in the hands of their opposition - in the hands of the capitalists.

Not necessarily in the hands of this or that capitalist, but in the hands of the capitalists as a whole. They came to get that very elementary understanding, that there's a state apparatus that exists, and it's loaded against us. And it's used by the capitalist class against us as we struggle on the union plane, in our union and on the shop floor. The state intervenes - it intervenes in various ways as you know. It intervenes by declaring strikes illegal - in some cases, compelling workers to go through endless processes of negotiation which undermine and sap the fires of the militants. It outlaws strikes that have even been legally accepted by the government, that have conformed to all the rules of the game. It declares that there is some emergency, there is some rough-house on the picket line, and they declare injunctions and say nobody can go on the picket line, or you can only have one or two people and the scabs can go through.

That's the state, and then if anyone violates it, the state can hit them on the head with the policeman's baton. Then they are thrust into the courts, so *(the state)* can decapitate the strike, the struggle. I don't need to go *(further)* into this type of exposition. I think it is all obvious how the apparatus at the hands of the capitalist class is used against the workers. And the workers begin to learn that the Liberal and Tory parties in Canada, for instance, and the Social Credit - well, the main parties in Canada - I was going to say the P.Q. *(Parti Québécois*) in Quebec - but it hasn't had a go yet - these parties are parties of the bosses. The bosses have control of the factories, and all that *(state)* apparatus at its disposal - its hirelings and its stooges, etc. - but *(they have)* these political parties. They're propaganda agents for the boss, and they rule the parliament and they pass the laws and regulate the courts, etc. in the interests of the boss. So the workers soon learn that they have to strengthen themselves, they have to have something more than a union. In a sense they are fighting as pictures often portray in cartoons in the union press, with one hand behind their back. They're only fighting with one hand, and you need the other hand, that's the political arm of labor.

Now of course, it's *(been)* a very long time since workers have developed that consciousness. It doesn't require a great deal of knowledge and experience for that. And of course, workers *(have)* moved into politics; workers' leaders have moved into politics. At first, they thought it was a pressure operation - all you had to do was get some friends in the Liberal Party, or the Tory Party - don't be surprised, even the Tory Party; people had that view - that all you had to do was get friends in any of the parties that had power. You see - you've got to go to the people that have power and you have to influence them; you've got to neutralize them, you have to butter up to them, you've got to do a few things to get them to be on your side.

And, of course you can't say that there has been no - absolutely no - success with such a strategy, but it is very obvious that it wasn't very successful, and certainly not consistent. That generally, with these parties, even if there are contradictions in their interests at certain times, *(they)* were class conscious and functioned generally in the same way, because they were parties of the bosses, *(with)* personnel and funds (...) And so this concept of "Gomperism" -known as Gomperism after the name of the head of the AF of L *(American Federation of Labor-craft unions-ed.)* - that came to become considered as bankrupt. As a matter of fact it's a dirty name among workers of any class consciousness - political consciousness - *(among)* workers who understand that labor has to have a party of its own. And so that was the next understanding of large sectors of the workers - you have to have a party of your own.

The labor party concept appears early in Canada

Now this concept of labor having a party of its own comes quite early in the history of the Canadian working people. Okay, of course there were lots of phonies. You may read a book by Doris French, I think it is, on the labor movement in Canada, and she portrays Donaghue, a guy by the name of Donaghue as a pioneer of the CCF - *(in reality)* he's a fink and sell-out. He was one the partisans of class collaboration, of Liberal Party pressure. She's got him completely miscast. But this idea came all the earlier in Canada, because fortunately we are not often compelled to go through the experiences of other sectors of the working class. We try to learn a bit from other workers'

experiences. Just as the most far-seeing elements *(tried)* to learn about the Russian workers' experience, a lot of workers learned about the British Labour Party experience, and as you know, the early settlers of Canada in their vast (*majority*), aside from the Québécois who are very seldom considered, were Anglo-Canadians, and they came over with certain experiences. Those who were not Anglo-Canadians came with other experiences too, some of them even more radical, from their own countries. But the proportion of those who had the most to say and soon got the positions of greater authority, who had a little more savvy at the time, they came over with the Anglo-Saxon experience, the British experience.

As you know, the British Labour Party was organized in 1900. In 1906 it made some big headway which had some impact, particularly on workers in Canada. The British connection in the trade union movement was quite strong. And it was in 1906, the year of the big breakthrough for the British Labour Party, that there was a resolution that came on the floor of the Victoria Trades and Labour Congress meeting in Victoria *(B.C.)* The Victoria TLC submitted a resolution to this congress in 1906. This motion was that there should be a labor party in Canada - it should be organized. The motion was moved by no less than the TLC secretary, P.M. Draper, who was a long-standing labor leader - I was going to say labor faker, but it was true, he was both - but he was the head, the Secretary, of the TLC which was the central trade union body in Canada. It was the only one of significance. He moved this motion, that there be a labor party.

Interestingly enough, it was opposed vigorously by the left wing, very vigorously. So I want to deal with this, because it posed an important problem - what should be the attitude of revolutionary socialists? Because there were revolutionary socialists then too in Canada. They didn't have the experience of the October Revolution, but they'd had some very valuable experiences. They were acquainted with some of the basic writings of Marxism, scientific socialism. There was a fellow by the name of R.P. Pettipiece, who moved the endorsement of the Socialist Party of Canada's principles and program - that's how he met it. Someone made a motion about a labor party presumably based on the unions, and this fellow Pettipiece, who was a member of the Socialist Party of Canada - a movement of some significance in British Columbia at that time, in 1906 - he proposed that the Congress on the contrary should endorse as the labor party, his party - which was a declared socialist party, the Socialist Party of Canada - that it should adopt the principles and program of his party.

Jimmy Simpson, who subsequently became the Mayor of Toronto - if you read much about (...) Canadian labor history you'll come across his name often - and a delegate from the miners' union, a fellow by the name of Sherman, proposed a compromise resolution. Their line was - they were in favor of local autonomy; they were for a labor party, but they were for local autonomy - that the main body, the Trades and Labour Congress, shouldn't become the sponsor of what they would call - is the labor party - but there should be autonomous established labor parties. So you see, they were trying to bridge that problem since in some sectors of the country there *(were)* now established parties of the working class - and I must say that in most cases these were socialist parties - they were not reformist parties, they were socialist parties.

These socialists who opposed vigorously the motion for a labor party, considered that that motion was a motion to set up a reform party - a party of Liberal-labor reform. That's how they saw it - and they opposed it! Draper's motion passed, 62 to 7, and 14 people abstained. Mr. Donaghue, he was ecstatic with the result . He saw it as a defeat for the socialists, and said so quite consciously, that the building of a labor party in Canada in 1906 was designed to defeat the socialists - that's what its purpose was. As a matter of fact, with Mr. Draper supporting it, it seems highly likely that that was what it was for. And he saw - he said it very clearly - Donaghue - who was member of the House, I think, at that time, even - he said that it was not only a defeat for the socialists but it was a victory for labor reformism. That's how he saw it; that's how Draper *(saw it)*, and that's how the labor party was projected as, by its proponents at that time - a party of labor reform

Trotsky comments on the labor party in the United States

Trotsky comments about this. When someone was talking about a labor party in the United States, he said of course it's not excluded that the labor brass will call for a labor party, and they will have their own purpose. He said it's doubtful though, and I'll read his quote here: "One can imagine that the trade union bureaucracy and its socialist left-democratic advisers may show themselves to be more perspicacious and begin the formation of a labor party before the revolutionary movement becomes too threatening. In view of their grasping empiricism and provincial narrowness of the American labor bureaucracy and aristocracy of labor, such perspicaciousness seems very improbable.. The failure of such an attempt in the past shows that the bureaucracy, so tenacious in its immediate aims, is absolutely incapable of systematic political action on a great scale even in the interests of capitalist society." Well, it looks like there might have been an exception to Trotsky's evaluation of the American labor bureaucracy. It would appear that the Canadian labor bureaucracy in 1906 had such perspicacity - that they were thinking in terms of stalling and forestalling the radicalization that was taking place in Canada at that time, which was quite extensive - but which isn't the theme of my talk - by projecting the concept of a labor party, which would be a victory against socialism and for labor reformism.

Well, it seems I am talking longer than I planned, so I don't think I will go into further quotes on this. At any rate, that type of labor party, it seems obvious to me that socialists would have to oppose, and our forefathers, Comrade Pettipiece and others were quite correct in opposing that kind of party. And to sort of vindicate their concept - their position - that party never bore fruit, never went anywhere - it disappeared. Past 1906 and nothing, by 1909, no vestiges even of that projection by the labor brass. That was a labor party projected by the labor brass, and I think we can say, although it is difficult to do all the research and get a feeling of the times, the nuances of it, we can say that if was possibly - probably - an example of a projection of a labor party to forestall the development of a socialist force.

Now, after that experiment, the failure of that experiment, there was a revival of labor party interest, during and towards the close of World War One. The Trades and Labour Congress endorsed and initiated the Canadian Labour Party just three months before the 1917 federal election. It was a period of great confusion and you'll get some of the confusion in this book, which is worth reading if you take the care, called Radical politics and Canadian labor, by a fellow called Robin. It's a study of Canadian labor party politics, very difficult to get ahold of, because it has no theme, no theory. At any rate, you'll see there is a great period of confusion following the 1917 projection of a labor party by the Trades and Labour Congress.

But by 1921, a certain order started to develop, and at the very moment the socialists - the revolutionary socialists - were organizing the Communist Party, the precursor of the League for Socialist Action. At that very moment, a labor party was starting to gel in Canada. So it's rather interesting to us to see how our forefathers dealt with that, particularly *(those)* immediately we know, Maurice Spector and Jack Macdonald, who continued to organize the *(precursor to the-ed.)* League for Socialist Action in the most concrete way. Well, this is rather an interesting development - the revolutionary socialists in that period **supported** the labor party. *(They)* took a totally different attitude than they did in 1906 - some of them the same personnel, but not the key ones. And so there's some interesting material on this - what it was.

In reality it was a federated party - in some ways you might say it was a united front. It wasn't a party. You see, the CCF was a party. It was formed, it was structured, it had an ideology, it had leading personnel who had established their authority in the party, the authority of their ideology. It was a structured movement and it was a party. It could never be a party of revolutionary socialists because it was a different type of party - it was a party of social reform, not a revolutionary party. The CCF, from its beginning, was established as a party of liberal-labor reform, basically an agrarian party, not even proletarian-based - but it was a party, established as a party of reform. But this labor party formation that came out of the period 1917 and 1921. *(It)* was a party that was called the Canadian Labour Party, but in reality it was a united front. All the various formations at that

time, including the Communist Party, were part of it - they never gave up their identity. As a matter of fact, Maurice Spector makes a very interesting statement about the character of the party, explaining the position of the Communist Party on the Canadian Labour Party, and I think it is worth reading.

It presents a problem, you see - here you are, you're organizing a revolutionary vanguard party, in 1921, and you're fighting hard to build this party. You're trying to convince all the socialists that this is the way, and that only with this party, organized, and built and structured, will we establish a socialist revolution in this country. And then along comes a labor party - what is it, and what's your attitude towards it? It's a very key question, because you're now dealing with other forces involved in the struggle - just as *(we)* have to orient to forces unfolding today in Canada.

Maurice Spector on the Canadian Labour Party

Well, here's what Maurice Spector had to say about it. He was the theoretical leader of the Communist Party of Canada and subsequently the founder of the Trotskyist movement. He was the first person to be expelled, just prior to *(Jack)* Macdonald, as the Communist Party degenerated a few years later. At any rate, he wrote this as an editorial in The Worker, as the leading theoretician. He outlined the conditions and explained the attitude of the Communist Party to it. I won't take time to read it (all). He said "The Canadian Labour Party is not yet a national party." It's not a national party. He said "The Independent Labour Party" - this was another formation, a reformist formation - *(and the others)* "were provincial parties: The Socialist Party of Canada, the Dominion Labour Party, and the Federated Labour Party are fast becoming negligible quantities." There were also other formations which were taking place at that time. "There exists a balance of political forces, an entirely different situation from where a small Communist Party found a large social-democratic party." This wasn't a large social-democratic party. "The political situation was in flux, and the Workers Party, a relative newcomer, was as well organized as the Independent Labour Party" - another component of this. "It is therefore essential" - this is an exact quote - "to maintain the closest possible contact with the awakening masses, as well as those workers following the Independent Labour Party - one of the major components in the Ontario area of the new labor party, to bring to bear on the growing political movement the militant spirit and understanding of the problems of labor, and unequivocally to fulfill the conditions for a united front under such conditions as prevail in Ontario."

So they **moved in** boldly. They had this party which was the party to which they were firmlycommitted, which they considered was the key struggle to achieve - the final formation of the Communist Party. But they moved into the Canadian Labour Party. But they moved in, in a certain way - they moved in completely, as they were. Somewhere it's described here - I don't know whether I can find it.

Each party, as the delegates of the Party *(the CLP)* agreed, in the formation of the party in B.C., that there be no sinking of the identity of any working class party at present in existence. Each party would carry on its own propaganda and during the election, all candidates endorsed by the Canadian Labour Party would run under the name of the Canadian Labour Party. So, everybody went into this party, particularly the revolutionary socialists. As a matter of fact, Jack Macdonald became very early an official of the Canadian Labour Party, although he was also - I think he was - the Executive Secretary, or a similar *(title)*, of the Communist Party when it was founded. He was the founding Executive Secretary of the Communist Party of Canada, so while he had that post (...) he also was Vice-President of the Labour Party, the Ontario section of the Labour Party, which was the biggest section. Subsequently A.E. Smith, who became one of the leaders of the Communist Party -- a little later, as a matter of fact just at the time that he became president - he became president - of the Canadian Labour Party.- he was a known communist (...)

Okay; now of course, that's a remarkable situation - any of us here moving in the political arena can't help but be struck by that. Persons who declare themselves to be revolutionary socialists are accepted in a united front, with various other forces, including leading spokespersons of the trade

union movement - I should say spokesmen because there were very few women involved at that time - and they carried their full program and their positions of office were established and recognized, and they were democratically elected - Jack Macdonald, "Moscow Jack" he was known as *(laughs in audience)* - he was vice-president of the Canadian Labour Party in Ontario. Now, that situation unfortunately didn't last for long, but I'd like to say a few words about the situation, that made it possible.

What was happening at that time was the continuation of the radicalization process that had swept across this country. That's what that formation of the Canadian Labour Party formation meant, as part of it. There was a growth of the union movement, there was a general radicalization taking place - out of that came the Communist Party. But it was ebbing, also - it was ebbing, and from what I can see, this process - the formation of the Canadian Labour Party - came, you might say, at the very period of transformation of the revolutionary wave - it started to ebb quite decisively. At any rate, this party was broken up, broken up by red-baiting - that's how it was broken up. Macdonald and Spector had just been expelled by the Communist Party and then we had this situation where there was a campaign of red-baiting and an attempt to isolate the Communist Party and to drive it out of the Canadian Labour Party formation.

It is very interesting to see how the attack on the left - against Macdonald - first took on the form to change the character of the party - the federated Labour Party. That had to stop - a very open type of relation *(ship)* where everybody put forward their views and then came to a common agreement about who will run in what seats, and the Communist Party members ran in some seats, and ILP members ran in some seats, but they were endorsed as Canadian Labour Party candidates. The Socialist Party of Canada also ran in some seats. At any rate, there was a move to block the party as a federated party - that was the first move. Then there were moves to exclude the Communist Party formally. When they couldn't change the structure of the party, there were moves to bar the Communist Party formally. Then there was a real orgy of red-baiting, and that party went down in this orgy. If you want to know the poison of red-baiting, this is a very good example of what it could do. It struck down this party. Now someone could speculate about the tenuous character of that party - we might do that in the discussion. But such a type of party has a very unstable character - an inherently unstable character - a united front. A labor party that is a united front? It strikes me really as the height of political absurdity in the long run, because it's composed of parties which presumably have basic differences, or otherwise if they were principled, *(they would)* fuse. To foresee an extended, long-term united front, particularly on an electoral basis strikes me as naïve, and not related to the experiences of the class struggle. But in actual fact, it was broken up before that differentiation could take place by an orgy of red-baiting.

An early victory for the Communist Party of Canada

The Communist Party came out of it very, very well. As a matter of fact, it was a pleasure to read about the struggle the Communist Party put on against this red-baiting, and how the labor brass moved in on us, and what devices they used. For instance, it came to a climax in British Columbia when the Canadian Labour Party came out for the enfranchisement of Orientals - the Japanese and Chinese living on the West Coast should have a vote - this became the big issue *(in)* breaking it *(the debate open-ed.)* You see the labor fakers and the right-wing were opposed to that; they were opposed to it. As a matter of fact, there had been the nomination of six candidates in Vancouver seats in the provincial election, and one of them, Angus McInnis, who we will come across later, and four others, withdrew their candidatures, when the Labour Party, for having endorsed the right of Orientals to the vote, came under the gun of the labor trade union movement - which was racist, permeated with racism.

Malcolm Bruce was one of the few candidates who remained. There were two candidates that carried the banner of the Canadian Labour Party as the party went under, and one of them was Malcolm Bruce, who you perhaps know, joined the League for Socialist Action shortly before his

death. He was one of the founders of the Communist Party of Canada, and he evolved in his experience.

Okay, now in some other ancillary writings, I commented about how, with the expulsion of (...) Spector and Macdonald - not myself, as a matter of fact - the author of Socialism and Revolution even said this: he said, with the expulsion of Spector and Macdonald, that was the end of an era for the Communist Party of Canada. Another authoritative writer on the evolution of communist movement in America, Theodore Draper, drew a similar conclusion. After the first ten years of the Communist Party, he said "By the *(end of)* the first ten years, the basic dynamism of that movement had been sapped, it had been destroyed." Well, with the expulsion of Macdonald, there is no doubt that for this party, it signified the *(programmatic)* disintegration and bankruptcy of the Communist Party of Canada.- it signified its Stalinization.

But that didn't mean that the party collapsed and disintegrated, or flew apart. Ideologically, it was bankrupt. But unfortunately, we know lots of situations where various parties or individuals are ideologically bankrupt but they retain a certain "life" - like a death agony, you know, which can extend itself for some period - and sometimes as death approaches, it *(can)* become even more active. But at any rate, this party didn't collapse, but it was politically bankrupt. What it had left, while it had no principled politics in its arsenal, it had gathered a certain cadre, a certain core of young people who considered themselves revolutionaries - who were revolutionaries, who wanted to be revolutionaries, who wanted to build a revolutionary vanguard party in this country. It had that certain cadre. And there came a new radicalization - a new wave of radicalization, a radicalization that had a staggering impact on all formations across Canada.

This radicalization came with what you might call, the first substantial experience of Canadian working people with capitalism. You know, even ourselves in this room, haven't had what you might say a common experience as human beings with capitalism. We've come from different experiences - different areas of struggle. Some of us come from the same experiences, but we haven't had a common, overall experience. The youth of 1929 and into the thirties had a titanic, a colossal, a staggering experience in common, as a class. I would say this was the basis of the first real process of radicalization of the Canadian working class - the working people as a whole. They had a taste of capitalism. They'd heard about it, parts of it. People had made predictions, and an analysis of the inherent laws of capitalism, but suddenly it hit everybody on an international scale.

The Depression: the first common experience of the Canadian working class

The world went under a process of a devastating depression, the like of which you can hardly conceive of, its repercussions it had on the Canadian people. As matter of fact, a new interest arose in the Soviet Union, because it was the only sector of the world where there wasn't a devastating economic crisis. I don't say it wasn't affected by it, but the rest of the world went down to a grinding halt. And the masses were thrown out of the factories and into the streets, out of their homes, deprived, and lost everything they had accumulated - a great many of them. So socialism became quite attractive again, to a new layer of radicals. It was a real substantial *(grounding)*. I think that is an important point - that this was the first experience that the **class** had with capitalism, a common experience, not a theoretical one, that *(not only-ed.)* a few people assimilated, understood from their vision, their insight, their social awareness - but the class as a whole *(as well)* from its own being, its very being.

The first reaction of the working class of this country to *(the)* Depression was one of paralysis, *(of)* staggering paralysis and loss of confidence in themselves. Workers lost everything. There was no welfare, you know. There was no welfare, there was no relief for a whole period. I don't know if you know what the word "relief" means - it was a form of welfare that you had to qualify for in a much more rigorous way than welfare. That had to be fought for. There was a means test imposed on everybody. It meant that you had to be destitute! Someone came around *(to inspect you)*. If you had

a - I was going to say TV, but people didn't even have radios then; a few people had radios - at any rate, you couldn't have anything. I can speak much from my own experience, from workers I knew. I knew a worker, a Dutch worker who was a skilled worker, a carpenter - he had tools of course, of his trade. He couldn't have them, he had to sell them. They were a form of material wealth, and he had to sell them for what he could get for them.

When the means test operator came around, they looked over your house, and you didn't have anything - you couldn't have anything, or you didn't go on relief. And of course the relief was a very vicious thing - it was by voucher. You had to go to certain stores, you had to buy certain things. You see all workers are considered to be somewhat insane, and they would buy anchovies and caviar - at any rate, they had to buy beans. You had to buy so much, it was all marked out. Your relief was given to you and you were given instructions as to what you could buy. You could buy at certain stores and the storekeeper could only sell you certain things. Very quickly you could tell who was on relief because the kids would wear the uniform of "reliefees" - they wore the clothes that were the established clothes that people wore who were on relief -- the badge of shame.

There were no jobs, the youth had no perspective *(of any)*; there were no school grants. You know, you couldn't continue to go to school if you couldn't get a job - you just went out onto the street, that's what you did. And of course you usually left home, because there was no welfare, no relief for single unemployed - there was no such thing. Of course, if you were a bit insensitive, I suppose you'd live on your parents' relief. Your parents got relief for children under certain ages - I don't have the data, I don't want to go into all the details of it. But at any rate if you were of working age, you just lived on them - you lived on the impoverishment of your parents and your younger sisters and brothers. So you left home, or you married; and there *(were)* all kinds of marriages of convenience to be sure. All kinds of young women and young men who couldn't get relief, married and became a "family." The sacred institution of the family was justified in getting relief, you see, so lots of people married - but some people didn't, and there are a lot of incidents I could tell you about. One of the most common things was that you left home and you rode back and forth across the country. A little while ago there was a big ad in the Toronto Star and they had a powerful, a poignant picture of the thirties - maybe you recall it, they ran it for a little while - it was a picture of the boxcars coming into Toronto from somewhere - anywhere - across Canada. They were loaded with young people - they came back and forth, on the move. My generation went back and forth across Canada, looking for - you don't know what. Well, you looked for a job, but there were no jobs. You might finally give up, completely demoralized, and you might to go to one of the slave labor camps and you would get 20 cents a day, and you did a little reforestation or something like that for the big paper companies - 20 cents a day. You've heard about the "On to Ottawa Trek." The B.C. government wanted to get rid of the unemployed, so they encouraged them, and of course the militants picked it up - why don't you have a trek "on to Ottawa"? The provincial government was being bankrupted you see, and the municipalities were being bankrupted, so the B.C. government said "On to Ottawa" and many persons had nowhere else to go, so they went on to Ottawa! Some of them were shot down like dogs in the street, in Regina.

And the bosses put the squeeze on those who were employed. You don't know what it is to be squeezed. If you worked in factories today, they're a honeymoon hotel compared to factories in the thirties *(laughs in audience)*. They really put the squeeze, the speedup, I tell you, there were a hundred guys outside the gate every morning, every morning, just waiting there, anxious and ready to do anything, almost anything to get a job. No matter what the work was and no matter what the conditions were - they had to get a job. So the bosses used all this, they really used unemployment - they like that unemployment; they put the squeeze on the workers.

The basic sectors of the working class were not organized. Only the crafts were organized - the carpenters, the joiners, the plasterers, the pattern-makers - these workers were organized, but the great bulk of the workers were completely unorganized, so they were all the more vulnerable to the bosses. Now there started to be a resistance. After the first demoralization and staggering impact it *(the Depression)* had on the working class, the workers started to revolt, as Marx predicted. They started to fight. There was the famous Estevan strike. The coal miners started to strike, in 1931 - the

first rumblings of the new radicalization in the labor force. Three miners were killed in the process of that strike though, and 12 to 18 were wounded by the RCMP. I don't know what the RCMP means to you; there's a big debate now in Canada. But to anybody in the thirties, they know what the RCMP means and they want to get rid of it - even the word "police" sounds better than "RCMP." The "yellow legs," the RCMP. They were the murder squads of the unemployed workers and the strikers. In Stratford there was a strike in '33. They brought tanks in, the first time that I ever heard where the Canadian government sent tanks in to battle a strike. These Whippet tanks were subsequently used in World War 2. Then there were the famous textile strikes in '37, the beginnings of the radicalization of the Quebec workers, the Dominion Textile strikes. They spread right through Valleyfield and through Drummondville and all the Quebec small towns where particularly women were suffering particularly utter super-degradation.

Finally, the North American workers fight back

And then there was the rise of the CIO. The first important strike, in '37, 4,000 workers struck for union recognition. They went on strike to establish a union - that's all they were out to do. This was a big strike. Perhaps you will recall that Mitchell Hepburn decided to send his police down there - "Hepburn's Huszars" they were. He was going to march them down - I think they were established in Toronto if I'm not mistaken - he was going to march them down and drive *(out)* the foreign invasion, you know, the American unions were foreign invaders; they were bringing the CIO up here, this communist plot that was going to corrupt the Canadian workers, you see, so the Hepburn government, the Liberal government, decided to drive the CIO out, its organizers and all, and it sent the police down there, but they never got down there, because there was a response among the rest of the Canadian working class, and that strike was won

But this radicalization - again, I'm not trying to give you a picture of the Thirties - this radicalization continued on and up and through the war - right through the war, to the end of the war, this radicalization. It resulted in the organization of the workers in the basic industries - this was in the process of the war. Some people think it came with 1937 - it did not. The unions were organized in Canada in '41, '43, '45, up into this period - the basic industrial unions. After the GM strike, Chrysler and - not being a car fan, I can't think of the other car - Ford *(laughs)* Ford weren't organized until some period after - that was the GM strike, that moved into McKinnon - was it?- in St. Catharines - *(from the audience)* McKinnon Industries now, yes - at any rate, workers in the process of this radicalization underwent this basic organization.

This also hit the agrarian protest movement called the CCF, which was organized in 1932, and made it radical - it came out of this radicalization. It gave it a veneer of radicalism - it was essentially a reformist, an agrarian-based party, but it gave a veneer of radical-ness to it, brought with it a tremendous new political consciousness to the Canadian working class. So you see, the last comment in the first class was to deal with the popular front, and I want to move into that popular front, because it is an important experience in this radicalization. And the concept of popular-frontism is with us again, so it might be very useful to have this information, and we can discuss it later.

The disorienting zigzags of the Stalinized Communist Party of Canada

In the midst of this radicalization, the Communist Party followed in this period, two different courses. One, it started to develop an ultra-leftist concept. It characterized the CCF, which is really a populist movement, an agrarian reform movement, it characterized it as "social fascist." It said it was a "social fascist" movement - you've heard that term I guess if you've been around the Maoists, you'll hear this term "social fascist." I haven't heard it since the Thirties - it was a term developed by Stalinism to *(indict-ed.)* - I was going to say to strive - to smear social-democracy *(as)* the "main danger." You can't have united fronts with social-democracy because they're the main danger,

they're paving the way for fascism, and you've got to hit them first. They're **social** fascists - the others are the real fascists, but these are social fascists. And Stewart Smith wrote a book called "Socialism and the CCF" *(a CPC pamphlet?-ed)* which carried that line - that the CCF (...) is the main enemy before the working class - more the enemy than the Liberals and Tories, at any rate I would assume.

They also *(the Stalinists-ed.)*, after a short period, dumped that. *(But)* that led to the defeat of the German working class - the theory of social fascism - that led to the paralysis of the mightiest working class in the world and their destruction by Hitler, the tool of the German capitalist class. And that policy was dumped, and the Communist Party veered over to another position, a completely opposite position, the theory of the Popular Front (...) And we were told, with that theory, that it was necessary to seek new alliances, to form alliances with liberal capitalist elements, in order to stop the main danger, which was Franco at one time, or Hitler, or some counterpart in France. We were supposed to form some kind of alliance, give up our own struggle and form any alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie because of course you couldn't maintain that alliance if you didn't pay some price for it, you see.

This concept of the popular front didn't have much significance in Canadian politics in general; it was about other countries. But we talked about it at the time, because we knew its implications - how it was going to be applied to Canada was not too clear, but it soon became clear. It found its fullest expression in Canada during World War 2, in the period of this tremendous radicalization that was taking place - prior to the war, and into the war, and towards the end of the war. It was directed against the labor party formation, directed against the CCF. The CCF had been endorsed by the Canadian Congress of Labour in 1943 as its political arm. It tells you that the party was changing and shifting its base and becoming a labor party. I think we can call it a labor party, although we formally came to that conclusion in 1948, when its real social base was reflected in the elections. It's one thing to have the support of delegates, representatives of unions and another thing to have rooted support. At any rate, by 1943 it had won the support of the main labor body in this country. This theory of the popular front was projected against the CCF, against the labor party. The CCF made big gains during the war. In 1941 it had 33.4% of the vote in British Columbia, *(and)* it won its first plurality in B.C. in 1941. In 1942 it won the riding of York South *(Toronto-ed)*. This is the riding where a fellow by the name of Joe Noseworthy ran - it subsequently became a solid CCF and NDP riding, York Township. He ran against Arthur Meighen, the head of the Tory party, a real blow at the bourgeois party apparatus. It imposed in the minds of many workers that the CCF was an alternative to the boss parties. In 1942 and 1944 there was a great expansion of the CCF and it made big gains. And the union movement also underwent a big expansion - the union movement did (*...broken sound on tape)*

Well, we were in the War, a bloody imperialist war which was imposed upon the Canadian people in a very strenuous way; many of us were conscripted and sent overseas, lost our lives in this war, and of course for the people at home, the squeeze was put on them to produce and to buy war savings bonds and certificates. Women were wrenched out of the home and told that their place was at the point of production in the shops, at the machines.

The CCF buckles under to support Canada's entry into WW2

At any rate, we had this war, and the big task according to the Communist Party was to win the war - that was the big task. And they attacked the CCF from the right, because they claimed that the CCF was not out to win the war with enough spirit, with enough vigor and vitality! It supported the war, you know - Woodsworth sold out the party in the House of Commons. One of the main planks of the CCF was its pacifist position. It was opposed to war - it was inscribed in the Regina Manifesto, they said they would never support a war, wars that would make the world safe for capitalism - I think that's the phrase they used in the Regina Manifesto. But Mr. Woodsworth *(J.S. Woodsworth, a founding leader of the CCF-ed.)*, using his authority as a man who was opposed to

war, committed the party **to** war, through Mr. Coldwell. Mr. Woodsworth made a token statement, and the leadership accepted…

(Interruption in the tape-ed.) a popular front. *(The Communist Party-ed.)* wanted a government of national unity, that is, they wanted the CCF to give up its existence and its struggle to build its force and its strength in the working class movement, to defend the working class and to project whatever aims the working class express through the CCF. They *(the CPC-ed.)* demanded the Canadian Congress of Labour commit itself to a no-strike pledge; that it should promise that it would never strike for the duration of the war. That was even too much for the brass of the Canadian Congress of Labour brass - they weren't too anxious to carry out any strikes, they had no intention of carrying out any strikes; they supported the war - but they didn't see why they should put both hands behind their backs, and remove themselves from any position of negotiations or bargaining or recognition.

They didn't want to take advantage of the dilemma of the Canadian capitalist class, but they thought they should get a few things for what they were doing because they were disciplining the Canadian working class into the war. But they were to commit themselves to a no-strike pledge. As a matter of fact in one of the books, Canadian Labour in Politics by *(Gad)* Horowitz, there's a rather interesting cartoon in the flap. It shows a bridge going across at Windsor, from Detroit to Windsor, and on this bridge *(are)* military supplies heading over to the Western Front, you see. And under the bridge is a man, and he's dressed up like a tabloid Red, you know, with a floppy hat and a bomb in his hand and everything. He's got a big can of TNT under the abutments of the bridge. It's Charlie Millard *(laughs from audience)* - head of the CCF, head of the Steelworkers Union - it's Charlie Millard, but he's also got scribbled on him over his name, "Trotskyite" *(laughs)* also. So Charlie Millard was accused of being a "Trotskyite" you see, because Charlie Millard didn't want to commit the Canadian labor movement to a no-strike pledge *(laughs from audience)*. He didn't see why we should commit ourselves to a no-strike pledge at all, because then, you know, you'll be rolled over, and run under; so he didn't want to make that commitment.

And, the CCF refused to give up the struggle for office. They still thought they wanted to fill the Canadian State apparatus with their content. They wanted to get into office. But there was the Peace at Teheran *(the "Big Three," Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin-ed.)* - there was a deal in the negotiations at Teheran and according to Tim Buck *(leader of the CPC-ed.)*, this was the new era that was opening up to the Canadian people. There were elements in Canadian society, namely the capitalist class, and Mackenzie King no less, the father of company unionism, who was "a man of Teheran" and who was going to guarantee a period of lasting peace and progress for Canada. As a matter of fact, the Communist Party said - and I am quoting them - "the Liberals are those capitalists who understand that they can and must cooperate with labour. They are the most democratic and pro-Teheran among the capitalists." And they attacked the CCF for bringing in a red herring, for talking at all about socialism. They called Ted Jollife, "Red Jollife" - that's what they called him. They said that the program of the CCF was not one of peaceful relations with capitalism, but struggle and conflict; therefore they were opposed to the CCF.

Horowitz in his book which documents quite a bit of it quite well, thinks that this was an aberration, that the Communist Party was involved in some kind of maneuver here; when they opposed the CCF all down the line. He doesn't understand the source of this policy of the Communist Party. He doesn't understand Stalinism. It wasn't an aberration - the Communist Party was carrying this line right across the world; it wasn't an incident. They carried it into the provincial elections, and I know I'm a little over time, but it's rather interesting because there's someone here from Windsor who might make some comments on it. Mitch Hepburn, the man who was going to send the Huszars in to smash the General Motors strike, suddenly became "a man of peace" of course because he was a Liberal, and he was a part of the King machine. And of course so did Paul Martin, another man of peace - he was elected from Windsor, you see - it will show you how far this operation went. George Burt, head of the Autoworkers Union in Windsor, Alex Parent, an open and declared member of the Labor Progressive Party, and Arthur Reaume, who was at one time a Tory but subsequently a Liberal - but always a labor faker and the main opponent to developing a labor party in the Windsor area - they were all nominated as official Liberal Party candidates. George Burt,

Alex Parent and Arthur Reaume - official Liberal Party candidates. They were called "UAW Lib-Labs" that was what their denomination was, on the slate. *(UAW: United Auto Workers, precedessor to the CAW-ed.)*

They succeeded in defeating the CCF - two Tories got elected. But Parent got elected - the Labor Progressive Party guy got elected, in this situation. Here he is, he ran as a Liberal; he took his seat as a Liberal! He was a Liberal: you walk like one, you talk like one, so you are one *(general laughter)*. But he called himself a Labor Progressive Party and he was a Labor Progressive Party member too, which was the name of the Communist Party. It was complete and utter - the collaboration, complete capitulation of the Communist Party to the Liberal Party. The Labour Progressive Party ran 37 open candidates, 27 of them opposed the CCF, and it would seem logical - *(Gerald)* Caplan did some research on this - he states that the CCF would have been the opposition in government in Ontario at that time, in 1945 - it seems reasonable. The same thing took place in B.C., but I'm over my time now, so I'll just knock it out.

The most glaring example was in the Grey North by-election. You know, the King government had a lot of trouble taking the Canadian people into war - don't ever think the Canadian people went to war willingly. They opposed the war, in their own way. The King government couldn't get the Minister of Defence elected to the House of Commons. You know, in the Canadian government you can appoint any person as your Minister of Defence, or War, whatever you want to call him at the time, you can give him the post and he can take the post but within a certain time he has to take a seat in the Commons - you have to win him a seat, he has to win one, he has to go to the people. So here's Canada up to its neck in a war, and the King government can't get McNaughton elected to the House of Commons - nobody will vote him to the House of Commons. I don't want to go into all the other examples but that was rather interesting. At any rate, they ran him in Grey North, in another *(attempt)* to get McNaughton into the House. The Communist Party was the main campaign operation for the Liberal Party. They carried the whole campaign. Mel - I can't think of his last name - top columnist for the Tribune for many years *("Colby" from the audience)* - Mel Colby came in and told me that he was in charge of the campaign in Grey North - he ran it; he was the campaign manager of the Liberal Party in Grey North (*he told the speaker-ed*) - this was after he broke away from the CP. The cry of the Communist Party was "put patriotism before partyism" *(groans from audience*). Grey North, according to the Tribune -the party press-proved that the Communist Party labor leaders and Liberals can work together. They published a big ad - and I think in Horowitz's book he reproduces this ad - it's got all the leaders of the so-called "communist-dominated unions." It's got all of them - Harris, who some of you might think of a man of record of fighting for the labor movement, C.S. Jacks - all these people - they put their pictures in this ad, and told the working class of Canada that labor supports the Liberal Party against the CCF - against the CCF. If anybody questions this, you can get the evidence, it's published in the *(Toronto)* Star, a full-page ad published right across Canada, of course, because the Communist Party was very sincere about carrying their line.

Well, it went on further, you know. The Communist Party and the Trades and Labour Congress had won a seat, *(by electing)* Pat *(Max-ed.)* Saltsman head of the CSU, the Canadian Seamen's Union, one of the most fighting unions in Canada. Saltsman became secretary-treasurer of the TLC. The TLC endorsed the Liberal Party, and Saltsman made some rather interesting statements.

At any rate, there we have another labor party experience. What should be the attitude of revolutionaries? For the revolutionaries of that time, organized in the Revolutionary Workers Party and publishing Labor Challenge - that was the name of their paper - they unequivocally identified themselves with the CCF. They supported the CCF. We considered the CCF represented, in a basic and elementary way, the immediate and historic interests of the working class at that time. There was no question in our mind, that we were opposed to a government of national unity - we were opposed to a no-strike pledge, and we identified with this radicalization. We tried to become part of it, and to propel it forward. We never crossed the class line, like the Communist Party did. We continued to pay increasing attention to the CCF. In 1948, I say, *Labor Challenge* characterized the CCF, at that time then, as a labor party - a reformist party that's true, a party of social reform - not a

party which will make the socialist revolution in this country, but a party of social reform, but a party which the workers should give critical support to. Not our party, but as an arena in which we, acting as revolutionaries, can propel the working class forward, *against* capitalism and on the path to the socialist revolution. Thank you. *(applause)*

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